exploration of oil and natural gas has been undertaken by various oil companies during the last three years and till date?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) to (c) In order to open up new areas for further exploration and offer these under future exploration rounds, Directorate General of Hydrocarbons (DGH) has carried out reconnatory surveys, as also satellite-gravity, magnetic, aeromagnetic, telluric, and geo-chemical surveys in various parts of the country, both onland and offshore including deep water areas. Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Ltd. (ONGC) and Oil India Ltd. (OIL) as also private companies have carried out 2-D and 3-D surveys in various parts of the country, in both onland and offshore areas.

During the last three years, exploration for hydrocarbons in the State of Uttar Pradesh was carried in one pre-New Exploration Licensing Policy(NELP) Kashipur block in the district of Rampur and in two NELP blocks, namely, block GV-ONN-97/1, falling in the districts of Ghaziabad, Bulandshahar, Moradabad, Badayun, Bareily, Shahjahanpur, Lakhimpur, Sitapur, Bharaich, Barabanki and Pilibhit, and block GV-ONN-2000/1, falling in the districts of Sultanpur, Pratapgarh, Allahabad, Jaunpur, Azamgarh, Varanasi and Ghazipur. Exploration for hydrocarbons was also carried out during this period in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Tripura, Uttaranchal and West Bengal.

Introduction of Gasohol

62. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 720 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 26th November, 2002 and state:

(a) the details in respect of pricing, expected demand and supply as also the phased programme drawn up for introduction of Gasohol in other parts of the country;

(b) whether it is a fact that Gasohol is considered less polluting; and

(c) if so, the details of studies conducted on its eco-friendly nature?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI SANTOSH GANGWAR): (a) The Oil Marketing Companies fix the price of blended petrol as per the laid down procedure. Present estimated annual requirement of anhydrous ethanol is 3,48,000 KL in the first phase of the programme, but production capacity is only 1,94,220 KL. Additional units are being set up to increase the ethanol production capacity. 9 major sugar producing States and 4 contiguous Union Territories are to be covered by 30th June, 2003, in the first phase of implementation of this programme.

(b) and (c) Emission studies indicate that there was reduction in carbon monoxide (CO) emissions from two wheelers with the use of 5% and 10% ethanol petrol blends with marginal increase in hydrocarbon (HC) emissions.

Two wheelers fitted with catalytic converters show substantial reduction in both carbon monoxide and hydrocarbon emission.

In the case of passenger cars, marginal increase in nitrogen oxide (NO) emissions was observed. However, there is substantial reduction in CO and HC emissions.

Import of crude oil

† 63. SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':
SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the import of crude oil during the first nine months of the year 2002-03 has increased in comparison to that of the same period during the last year;

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.